Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, KS, US

SUBJECT: TONGSUN PARK ARRANGEMENTS: ETHICS COMMITTEE ACCESS

REF: SEOUL 0312

1. THE DISCUSSIONS YOU HAVE REPORTED REFTEL APPEAR MOST CONSTRUCTIVE. THE PROPOSED INFORMAL MEETING MONDAY JANUARY 16 BETWEEN CONGRESSMAN CAPUTO, MR. SWILLINGER, AND ROK VICE FOREIGN MINISTER RHIE MOON-YONG WILL FIT EASILY INTO THE EFFORT TO FACILITATE NECESSARY CONGRESSIONAL ACCESS TO TONGSUN PARK. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS BE DONE AT THE LEVEL OF INFORMAL DIALOGUE, HOWEVER, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE ABSENCE OF A COHERENT COORDINATION AT THIS STAGE BACK HERE BETWEEN THE RESPECTIVE SENATE AND HOUSE
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COMMITTEES AND THE NEED TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE PROPOSED MEETING AND THE DIRECT GOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSIONS. PUBLICITY WILL BE UNHELPFUL BUT PROBABLY UNAVOIDABLE.
2. WE HAVE CONVEYED THE HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE'S REQUEST TO THE ROK EMBASSY HERE IN WASHINGTON. IT SEEMS USEFUL
TO THE ROK EMBASSY HERE IN WASHINGTON. IT SEEMS USEFUL
TO CENTER OUR DIRECT DIALOGUE WITH THE ROKG ON THIS MATTER

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FIRST HERE THROUGH THE EMBASSY. AMBASSADOR KIM WILL BE RETURNING TO SEOUL ABOUT JANUARY 21 FOR THE PRIMARY PURPOSE

OF CONVEYING THE IMPORTANCE OF COOPERATING WITH THE CONGRESS ON THIS ISSUE AND DISCUSSING MODALITIES. THIS COMING WEEK WE WILL BE DISCUSSING THIS WITH HIM AND HIS STAFF IN GREATER DETAIL AND ALSO HOPE TO FACILITATE A DIRECT MEETING BETWEEN THE EMBASSY AND COMMITTEE STAFFERS.

3. WE HAVE ENCOURAGED THE HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE STAFF TO KEEP OPEN THEIR SEPARATE CHANNEL THROUGH HUNDLEY TO PARK. BASED ON YOUR ASSESSMENT, WE ARE PROCEEDING ON THE BASIS THAT THE ROKG WILL WISH ARRANGEMENTS FOR PARK TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE ETHICS COMMITTEES TO APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN ARRIVED AT PRIVATELY RATHER THAN VIA GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT. THUS, WE SEE OUR PRIMARY TASKS AS WINNING ROKG ACQUIESCENCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF ARRANGEMENTS IN WHICH THEY CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE.

4. WHEN AMBASSADOR KIM RETURNS TO SEOUL AT THE END OF THE COMING WEEK WE WOULD CORRESPONDINGLY SHIFT OUR OWN FOCUS OF DIALOGUE TO SEOUL AS WELL SO THAT YOU CAN REINFORCE HIS EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT FULLER UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICALLY NECESSARY FURTHER STEPS HERE. BY THEN THE JUSTICE INTERROGATION SHOULD BE COMPLETE, OR NEARLY SO, AND WE WILL BE BUILDING ON THAT ACCOMPLISHMENT.
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5. NOTE: ALL MESSAGES RELATING TO INTERACTION WITH CONGRESSIONAL AND ROKG INTERESTS IN THIS SUBJECT SHOULD CONTINUE AT LEAST TO BE CAPTIONED EXDIS. REFTEL WAS RECEIVED WITHOUT EXDIS CAPTION AND INITIALLY RECEIVED UNFORTUNATELY WIDE DISTRIBUTION.
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